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## Law School Update: "College Proceeds with Full-Blown Feasibility Study"; "Santoro Appointed Law School Consultant"

Roger Williams University

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ROGER  
WILLIAMS  
COLLEGE

# THE BRIDGE

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 1991

*College Emphasizes*

## Global Awareness

*Full-Scale Law School Feasibility Study Underway*

*College Initiates Faculty Exchange Program with Moscow  
Linguistic University*

*Students Experience the United Nations*

*120 International Students Choose Roger Williams College*

*Campus Works for Cleaner Environment*







# THE BRIDGE

THE MAGAZINE OF ROGER WILLIAMS COLLEGE; SEPTEMBER 1991

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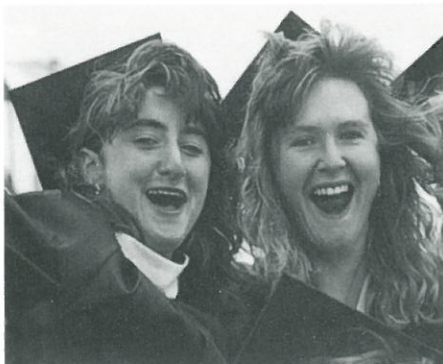
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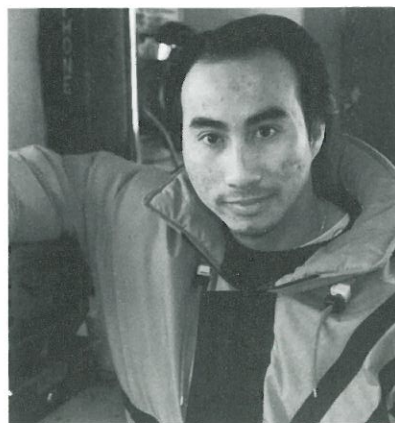
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ROGER WILLIAMS COLLEGE



# LAW SCHOOL UPDATE

## College Proceeds with Full-Blown Feasibility Study

by Betty M. van Iersel, APR

"A law school would enhance the legal culture in Rhode Island and provide opportunities for research and continuing legal education which are not now available in this state."

This was the consensus of the 15-member, blue-ribbon panel charged with exploring the feasibility of establishing a law school at Roger Williams College in its final report to President Natale A. Sicuro.

Based upon the strong committee recommendation, the College is proceeding with a more detailed feasibility study, which could result in the establishment of Rhode Island's first law school as early as fall 1993. Rhode Island is one of only three states in the United States without a school of law.

### Preliminary Survey Shows Demand

Chaired by Joseph R. Weisberger, associate justice of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island, the committee had been meeting since January 1990. In conjunction with the study, a preliminary market survey of potential students was conducted, which demonstrated a demand for a law school in Rhode Island.

**"Establishment of an accredited law school . . . one of first-rate quality"** is emphasized by the committee. A new Law School Advisory Board, chaired by Justice Weisberger, has been formed to work with the American Bar Association during the in-depth feasibility study in conjunction with the Board of Trustees Law School Committee, chaired by Dr. Victoria Lederberg, and the Legal Studies Committee of faculty and administrators chaired by Vice President for Academic Affairs Malcolm H. Forbes.

American Bar Association representatives have been in Rhode Island this summer to assist the advisory board and committee members in developing guidelines.

### Answers to Frequent Questions

#### **Q. How long will the in-depth feasibility study take?**

A. Results are expected to be available to the College Board of Trustees by December 1991. A final decision on whether to establish a law school would be made soon after.

#### **Q. If the in-depth feasibility study is positive, and Trustees approve the Law School, when would students actually be able to enroll?**

A. Students could begin course work as early as September 1993, depending upon findings of the in-depth study.

#### **Q. What would the projected enrollment be? Would there be evening as well as day programs?**

A. If established, the Law School would offer day and evening programs, with an eventual enrollment of 350 full-time and 175 part-time students.

#### **Q. When would the proposed Law School be eligible for accreditation by the American Bar Association (ABA)?**

A. It would first be eligible to apply for provisional accreditation after one year of operation. By working closely with the American Bar Association now, the College is doing everything possible to ensure full accreditation at the earliest date.

#### **Q. When could the Law School become self-supporting?**

A. Based upon surveys of three relatively new law schools of similar size in Florida, New Hampshire and North Carolina, the committee projected that the proposed Law School will become self-supporting after five years of operation.

#### **Q. What would be the projected start-up investment on the part of the College?**

A. Cost of building a new facility on the Bristol campus to house the Law School is estimated at \$8 million plus cost of library collection and furnishings for the first three years, calculated at \$2,900,000, for a total of \$10,900,000. In addition, the committee report states that a start-up investment by the College of \$2.5 million in the first year and an additional \$2.5 million through a five-year fund raising campaign, for a total commitment of \$5 million, would be required to underwrite non-capital costs.

#### **Q. How would these funds be raised?**

A. A suggested bond issue in the amount of \$11,100,000 to be paid over a period of 25 years at an interest rate (tax-exempt) of approximately 7.7 percent would fund a portion of estimated start-up costs. The College would repay a portion of these funds after the Law School became self-sustaining.

Law School Advisory Board members met in the Library Board Room June 13 to discuss the feasibility study. From left are: Dr. Malcolm H. Forbes, vice president for academic affairs and chair, Legal Studies Committee; Board of Trustees Chairman Ralph R. Papitto; Dr. Victoria Lederberg, Board secretary and chair, Board of Trustees Law School Committee; and The Hon. Joseph R. Weisberger, Rhode Island Supreme Court Justice and chair, Law School Advisory Board.







From left are: James P. White from Indiana University, consultant on Legal Education to the American Bar Association; Anthony Santoro of the Widener University Law School, consultant for the feasibility study; and Board Chairman Ralph R. Papitto.

**Q. Where would the Law School be located?**

A. No final decision has been made. However, cost comparisons contained in the report show a Bristol site to be cost-effective because the Law School could be built on land already owned by the College. A Providence site would be more costly, because the College would have to purchase land. ABA accreditation requirements dictate that the College must own the land on which the proposed Law School would be located.

**Q. What type of demand did the preliminary market survey indicate?**

A. Dr. Malcolm Forbes conducted a preliminary survey in which he received responses from 737 full-time students at Rhode Island colleges and universities who had indicated an interest in attending law school. Of these, 203 preferred to attend an accredited law school in Rhode Island, and 406 indicated they would attend law school in Rhode Island if not accepted elsewhere. Responses from 481 part-time students in law and political science were also positive.



(Above) From left are: Board Treasurer Vincent Capuano; Consultant Anthony Santoro; and Board Vice Chairman Joseph R. DiStefano, member of the Board of Trustees Law School Committee. (Right) Dean Santoro.

## Santoro Appointed Law School Study Consultant

Anthony Santoro, dean of the Widener University Law School, has been appointed as consultant for the Roger Williams College Law School Feasibility Study.

"We are pleased to have someone of Dean Santoro's caliber and depth of experience involved in this study," College President Natale A. Sicuro said.

"The significance of this undertaking extends well beyond Rhode Island to New England as a whole."

Dean Santoro heads the School of Law for Widener University with campuses in Wilmington, Del., and Harrisburg, Pa. He was a member of the founding faculty of Western New England School of Law, Springfield, Mass.; the founding dean of Bridgeport (Conn.) University School of Law; and the American Bar Association Consultant for St. Thomas University of Law, Miami, Fla.

He holds a Juris Doctor degree and a Master of Laws in Taxation degree from Georgetown University Law Center, in addition to a Bachelor of Arts degree from Boston College.



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